

Remarks

I. Previous Claim Amendments

Original PCT claims 17-24 were cancelled without prejudice in an Amendment under Article 34 filed on July 12, 2005.

Original PCT claims 25-32 were renumbered as 17-24 in the Amendment under Article 34 filed on July 12, 2005, and were limited to compounds of Formula I in the Preliminary Amendment filed December 23, 2005.

Original PCT claims 11-16 were cancelled without prejudice in the Preliminary Amendment filed December 23, 2005.

Applicants reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of the canceled claims in a continuing application.

II. Current Claim Amendments

Claims 4 and 10 are hereby withdrawn as directed to non-elected species.

No new matter is added by way of this amendment.

III. Restriction Requirement

In the above-referenced Office Action, the Examiner divided the claims into the following groups:

Group I. Claims 1-10, 25-32 are drawn to a method for conditioning of the skin using Formula I.

Group II. Claims 11-16, 25-32 are drawn to a method for conditioning of the skin using Formula II.

Group III. Claims 17-24, 25-32 are drawn to a method for conditioning of the skin using Formula III.

However, as noted above, **this action is apparently based on the original PCT claims. The claims have been twice amended since the PCT filing**, first under

Article 34 of the PCT, in an amendment filed with the US/IPEA on July 12, 2005, and subsequently on entering the National Stage in the US, in a Preliminary Amendment filed with the USPTO on December 23, 2005. Copies of both amendments are enclosed.

As such, the claims have already been limited to Group I; that is, to claims directed to a method for conditioning of the skin using compounds of Formula I.

Thus, in response, Applicants elect claims corresponding to Group I, without traverse.

Applicants further elect for initial search and prosecution, without traverse, the species of Formula I in which: each of X^1 , X^2 , X^3 and OR^1 is hydroxy (OH); R^2 forms, together with carbon 9, a fused cyclopropyl ring, and ---- represents a single bond between carbons 9 and 11. This species embodies the compound cycloastragenol. Claims 1-3, 5-8, and 17-24 are readable on this species.

Applicants withdraw from initial consideration non-elected claims 4 and 10, without prejudice, while reserving the right to rejoin these claims later in prosecution.

If in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at (650) 590-0700.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: September 29, 2008

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